

General John Watts dePeyster



Anthony Wayne

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FOREWORD

The following article, signed by General John Watts de Peyster, evaluates the military career of Anthony Wayne. Originally published in the *MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY*, volume XV, February, 1886, the account is reprinted verbatim.

The Boards and the Staff of the Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County present this study in the hope that it will be interesting and informative to Library patrons.

Among the Continental generals or prominent commanders in the American Revolutionary War, there were two *born*-soldiers, equally remarkable for their instinctive conception of the requirements and the duties of the profession. The first, Arnold, was very highly estimated by General Armstrong, author of *The Newburgh Letters*. He was famous for his march through the wilds of Maine to the support of Montgomery before Quebec in 1775; for his successful march to the relief of Fort Stanwix in 1777; and as the real hero and victor *in the field*, over Burgoyne, in both the battles commonly known as Stillwater or Saratoga, in the same year. The other and the superior, was Anthony Wayne, best known as the captor of Stony Point in 1779, but worthy of higher notice for his maneuvering against "the great and good" Cornwallis in Virginia, especially at Green Spring in 1781, and in his victory on the Miami in 1794. Wayne was a soldier, and, in the field, he was that and nothing else. All his instincts were military; the breath of his nostrils was war, and he snuffed up the battle afar off, like the war-horse in Job. Like a true and chivalric soldier, he was a gentleman in his instincts, clean, neat, and even prinky; somewhat of a martinet without a real martinet's inflexibility.

Self-constituted judges who cannot see beyond the surface—cannot look into the depths—called him "*Dandy* Wayne," forgetting that in very many cases dandyism or even finical attention to dress, is one of the qualities that enter into the composition of a real hero. In a letter to Washington, upon the subject of a Light Corps, Wayne developed his "insuperable bias in favor of an elegant uniform and soldierly appearance; so much so that I would much rather risk my life and reputation at the head of the same men, in an attack, clothed and appointed as I could wish, merely with bayonets and a single charge of ammunition, than to take them as they appear in common, with sixty rounds of cartridges. It may be a false idea, but I cannot help cherishing it." Hepburn, one of the best officers of Gustavus Adolphus, was so much of a "dandy" that the king rebuked his ultra attention to appearance in clothes and arms so sharply that the Scot was induced to throw up his commission, and although the king, "ate humble pie," and apologized and even condescended to ask Hepburn to assist him with his courage, coolness, and comprehension to avert a disaster

at Nurnberg, Hepburn, while he responded to the royal request, still persisted in leaving the Swedish service, and went where he could dress and plume himself as he pleased. Others called Wayne "Mad Anthony," which was exactly the epithet, *der Tollc*, applied to Helmold Wrangel, who was one of the boldest, ablest, and most enterprising commanders in the Swedish Army, when it was considered the best in the world and the finest school for officers; and also to Duke Christian, of Brunswick, whose superior never led a cavalry charge. Murat was a fool to him. Mad as they elected



ANTHONY WAYNE

Major-General and Third General-in-Chief U. S. A.

to style Duke Christian, he was as marvelous a creator of armies as if he almost possessed the art of evoking them, as Glendower boasted he could call spirits from the vasty deep. Wayne was a soldier; Arnold was anything and everything, from general to jockey; ready to turn his hand to anything that promised to pay; smart enough for every occasion, and successful where it depended entirely upon himself. Both were full of soldierly instincts, but entirely different in sentiment and principle. While they could use inadequate material to advantage at crises, they likewise could soon convert it into adequate, and then they could use every kind of material, or personal, to better advantage than any of their associates. Wayne was the Prince Leopold of Glogau; the Chevert of Prague; the Laudon of Schweidnitz; and, withal, the Davoust of Auerstadt.

He was under a cloud for a short time for his mishap at Paoli, but if any general can find an excuse for permitting his troops to be surprised, Wayne was excusable on that occasion. There may have been other officers in the Continental Army occupying subordinate positions—who might have developed, with opportunity, into illustrious leaders, equal to great professional chiefs; but destiny denied to them the chances or occasions which were necessary for them to develop and exhibit their capacity to plan and to lead.

Wayne had a proper descent for a soldier. His grandfather was a native of Yorkshire, England, whose people have always been noted for manliness and a certain smartness which ranges between praiseworthy astuteness and simple cunning. Early in life he emigrated to Ireland and settled in the County of Wicklow, the next south of Dublin. His business was farming, but he filled civil as well as military offices, and commanded a squadron (company?) of dragoons in the Battle of the Boyne—one of the most notable collisions in the world, which ought to rank in the class of decisive battles, because, *immediately*, it settled the fate of Ireland and the Stuart dynasty, *mediately*, that of England, and *remotely*, that of the whole world. In serving under William III., Wayne must have profited by observing one of the greatest exemplars of our race; to whom Freedom owes more than most men can conceive, and who, as Hallam admits, “honored the British Crown by wearing it.” This Captain, or Major Anthony Wayne, emigrated a second time, and in 1722, came out to America, purchased an extensive realty in Chester County, Province of Pennsylvania, and of these lands assigned a portion to each of his four sons. He must have been a man of means and of a judgment fitted for his position. As well as he had done his duty in civil office and as a soldier, he performed it in private life. He gave a good education to his boys, and he left them well settled in life. “His youngest son, Isaac Wayne, father of the American general, was a man of strong mind, great industry, and enterprise. He frequently represented the County of Chester in the Provincial Legislature, and, in the capacity of a commissioned officer, repeatedly distinguished himself in expeditions against the Indians. He was at all times celebrated for his patriotism and universally admired for his integrity. After a long life of usefulness to his country, family, and friends, he died in the year 1774, leaving one son and two daughters.”

This only son was Major-General Anthony Wayne, born in the township of East Town, Chester County, Pennsylvania, 1st January, 1745. It is to be feared that he was a wild slip, and he gave a great deal of trouble to his uncle, Gabriel Wayne, to whom his education was committed, who, for

his fighting proclivities and military aspirations, threatened to dismiss him from his school as incorrigible. Fortunately beneath these animal spirits lay a firm basis of good sense. The judicious arguments of his father converted him into a diligent student. He took a great interest in mathematics, a token of a strong mind, and the nephew, whom the uncle threatened to dismiss, in eighteen months had mastered all that the preceptor could teach. From this school, he was transferred to the Philadelphia Academy, and as early as sixteen he was considered fit to go out into the world and grapple with its exigencies. At the date of the Declaration of Independence, Wayne was in the prime of life, between thirty-one and thirty-two. At thirty he was colonel of a regiment of volunteers, which dated from September, 1775. In 1776, his regiment was accepted by Congress, and he received his commission as Continental, that is regular colonel.

The stories of Wayne's boyhood* resemble those told of Napoleon Bonaparte. He engaged his fellow-scholars in games of mimic war and turned their heads with imitations in miniature of military operations. The arguments and influence of a sensible father repressed the ardor of the son, and induced him to study diligently. At the age of eighteen (1763) he returned home from the Philadelphia Academy with an amount of information valuable for the times and their requirements, and at once found himself fitted to become a successful civil engineer, or as it was then termed, a land surveyor. A number of the great and successful men of the Revolutionary times began their careers as surveyors—Washington, the most notable example. In March, 1765, although only just entering upon his twenty-first year, he was selected by the practical Benjamin Franklin to proceed to Nova Scotia, as agent, and survey a large body of land in that province, with the object of its settlement through an association consisting of many wealthy and distinguished persons. His labors continued through the available portions of two years, and resulted most satisfactorily for the interests of his employers.

At Christ Church, Philadelphia, 25th March, 1766, Anthony Wayne married the daughter of Bartholomew Penrose, a merchant of note in

* The best, most interesting and most detailed Life of Major-General Anthony Wayne appeared in *The Casket, Flowers of Literature, Wit and Sentiment*, published by S. C. Atkinson Philadelphia, in volumes for 1829 and 1830. The numbers containing the biography of General Wayne were collected in a neat volume illustrated with newspaper cuttings, maps and portraits of Wayne and deposited in the Geological Library, Governors' Island, by A. W. Vogdes, U. S. Artillery, whose father, Brigadier-General I. Vogdes, U. S. A., of Pennsylvania, is a great nephew of General Anthony Wayne, and is full of valuable anecdotes in connection with the general's career. The *best portrait*, according to the family subscript "General Anth'y Wayne," was engraved by Edwin, but there was no indication of where it appeared. If the relatives of the general are correct, then none of the generally received pictures give any idea of the man.

Philadelphia, and went to farming in the county (Chester) in which he was born. For the next six or seven years his time was divided between the plow and the theodolite, and with the latter he won quite a local and justified celebrity. During the same period he held a number of the highest county offices, and took an active part in the proceedings which prepared so many minds for revolution. He was one of the provincial deputation, chosen in 1774, to confer on the state of affairs between the colonies and the mother country, growing constantly more and more alarming, and was also member of the Pennsylvania Convention, held at Philadelphia, on matters in the same connection. He was elected from Chester County as a member of the Pennsylvania Legislature of 1774-5; and in the summer of 1775 he was appointed a member of the Committee of Safety, in which he was associated with Dr. Franklin, John Dickinson, better known, perhaps, for his writings as the "Philadelphia Farmer," and other prominent individuals.

Meanwhile Wayne was studying every book on military matters to which he could gain access, and devoting all his leisure time to drilling every person who had any predilection for military service. His personal character, his courage, and his energy, backed by his attainments, to which the great majority were utter strangers, procured him the position of Colonel of the First Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, organized for expected service. As before stated as soon as the drift of public affairs, and the skirmish at Lexington, 19th April, 1775, made war an accomplished fact, Congress accepted his regiment and commissioned him its colonel.

Although not a large man, and little above what is usually considered middle size, Wayne was a striking figure. "His portrait by Charles Peale is by far the best likeness. He had a fine, animated, pleasing countenance, dark hair, dark hazel eyes, expressing intelligence and penetration, and a nose inclined to aquiline. His natural disposition was amiable, his manners refined, his character determined and enterprising, and in his attachments he was ardent and sincere." He took part in the unfortunate Canada campaign of 1776, in which he distinguished himself by his bravery and conduct, and was severely wounded. When the Colonial forces, after abandoning Canada, were concentrated at Ticonderoga, General Schuyler confided the command of this important post and its dependencies to Colonel Wayne. On 21st February, 1777, Congress conferred on him the rank of brigadier-general. He continued in command at Ticonderoga from November, 1776, until May, 1777, when he was ordered to join General Washington in New Jersey. On leaving he was the recipient of an address signed by all the field officers, couched in the most affectionate

and flattering terms. He soon acquired the confidence of Washington and of the troops. This he continued to deserve, and he greatly distinguished himself on various occasions. In command of a division, Wayne took an important part in the battle of the Brandywine, 11th September, 1777. According to critical judgment, Wayne's brigade was one of the most conspicuous for its resolute bearing and effect in this action, and set an example which unfortunately was not imitated by others, whose commanders have claimed for *their* exertions on this field a credit which no one denied to Wayne.

The catastrophe which first brought him conspicuously before the country, is best known as the "Surprise at Paoli's Tavern," styled by the British the "Attack upon the Rebels near the White Horse Tavern" from the "British camp at Trudruffrin." Military experts have established, as a rule, that no officer can justify himself for permitting an enemy to take him by surprise, but there must be an exception to this in the case of Wayne. Sufficient to say Washington had assigned to him the duty of harassing the British rear and attempting to cut off his baggage. There is no doubt but that the Colonial troops were acting under the same disadvantages as those experienced by the Union forces when operating in Virginia and other Southern States during the "Slave-holders' Rebellion." In many instances the feelings of the inhabitants were favorable to the British. The result was they concealed the movements of the Royal forces from Wayne, and served as spies and guides for the latter. Wayne's defense before the court-martial which "acquitted him with honor," is perhaps the best account of the affair extant.

In the battle of Germantown he did all that an officer could do to secure the victory which the Americans claim was at one time within their grasp, and slipped as it were between their fingers, and in covering their retreat used every exertion that prudence and bravery could dictate. It is claimed for General Wayne during the whole of the campaign of 1777, the duty, which was usually performed by three general officers, owing to a combination of circumstances, was performed by him alone.

At Monmouth, where the American regular first developed the fact that the drilled American was equal to the best, had no superior in the world—at Monmouth, where the Continental troops received their "baptism of blood and of fire," WAYNE was the HERO.

It has become the fashion with a certain class of writers, with an assurance equaling that of a mythical Jomini, to make out that the young French Marquis de La Fayette was a war genius of the highest order, and a perfect match in generalship for the best officer the British had in America,



.. at Monmouth.....Wayne was the Hero.

"the good and great," the gallant, generous, *genial* (in the German sense) Cornwallis. It has always been the writer's opinion that Washington's regard for the boy-general, La Fayette, while it may, in a measure, have been founded in friendship, had its real base in policy, and that when the commander-in-chief detached our native brigadier, Anthony Wayne, with his famous Light Brigade, to act under the comparatively inexperienced young foreign major-general, he intended Wayne to serve as a balance-wheel to La Fayette, as Thomas served as a balance-wheel to every superior in rank until Nashville demonstrated that the balance-wheel was, in fact, about the whole machine. What Traun in the previous century had been to the Austrian archdukes, Charles and Francis in their operations against the great Frederic; Blumenthal to the Crown Prince of Prussia, and what numerous great generals were to their superiors in aristocratical eminence, however inferior in all the grandeur of mind as applied to the carrying on of war, Wayne was to La Fayette. It is the writer's idea that Wayne was sent to dry-nurse the French marquis, and all that the latter accomplished to the purpose, in Virginia in 1781, was due to the former, Pennsylvania's ablest representative in the field during America's first War for Independence.

It is not only curious, but instructive, to find that war, like water, follows inevitable courses, and that decisive or influential battles have been fought repeatedly and inevitably on the same fields. This is admitted. When the late contest developed into the assurance of a great war, one of our most distinguished generals, a near friend, wrote: "Send me Tarleton's *Campaigns and Maps* and all the works relating to the Revolutionary War you can get, for I am satisfied that our marches and movements and fighting will have to follow the same lines as in the preceding century." The event showed the perfect correctness of this officer's foresight. It was not wonderful, but he had profited by what he had studied and seen, by which few are willing to benefit, or at least are able to do. The grounds and fields of the Cornwallis-La Fayette-Wayne operations were wet again and again with blood shed in fratricidal engagements in the Revolution as they were in the "Great American Conflict." Yorktown, besieged by the Americans and French in 1781, was again by the Union Army in 1861. Williamsburg was the scene, 5th May, 1862, of the first stand-up fight between the two (Union and rebel) armies of the Potomac (one originally the army of northeastern Virginia and the other afterwards of northern Virginia), witnessed similar scenes in 1781, as well as Green Spring, the spot rendered famous by the hardihood of Wayne.*

* While remarking on localities in this part of the Peninsula, one, most remarkable, is *Cold*

Cornwallis was in Virginia master of the situation, having made a march in 1781, something like that of Sherman in 1865, northward through the Carolinas. The entire subjugation of Virginia was a part of the British plan of operations for 1781. While expecting to be reinforced, Clinton became so alarmed about his own position in New York where the allies intended to "leave him *severely alone*," he actually howled to Cornwallis on the James, for troops to make himself secure, when he was incurring not even the slightest chance of danger on the Hudson. After he had allowed these troops to depart, Cornwallis found himself constrained to take another entirely different course. Feeling that he was not strong enough to remain any longer at Williamsburg he determined to cross the river James and fall back to Portsmouth. The retreat of Cornwallis placed no feather in the cap of the Americans, of Lafayette, or of any one else. "Light Horse Harry" Lee, in his history, is very just to the English Marquis. He admits that Cornwallis "*yielded to assurances* [those of Sir Henry Clinton] *too solemn to be slighted*," and incurred ruin by "adhering to his instructions." Carrying out his design, Cornwallis encamped so as to cover a ford which led to Jamestown Island and the same evening the Queen's Rangers crossed into the Island. The two following days were consumed in getting the baggage across. The day after Cornwallis evacuated Williamsburg, La Fayette also changed position. Having crossed the Chickahominy, he pushed forward his best troops within nine miles of the British camp, in hopes of being able to attack the enemy's rear-guard when left to itself and after the other and principal forces had passed over into Jamestown Island. Cornwallis saw through this project, and camped almost the whole of his army on advantageous ground, concentrating his troops as

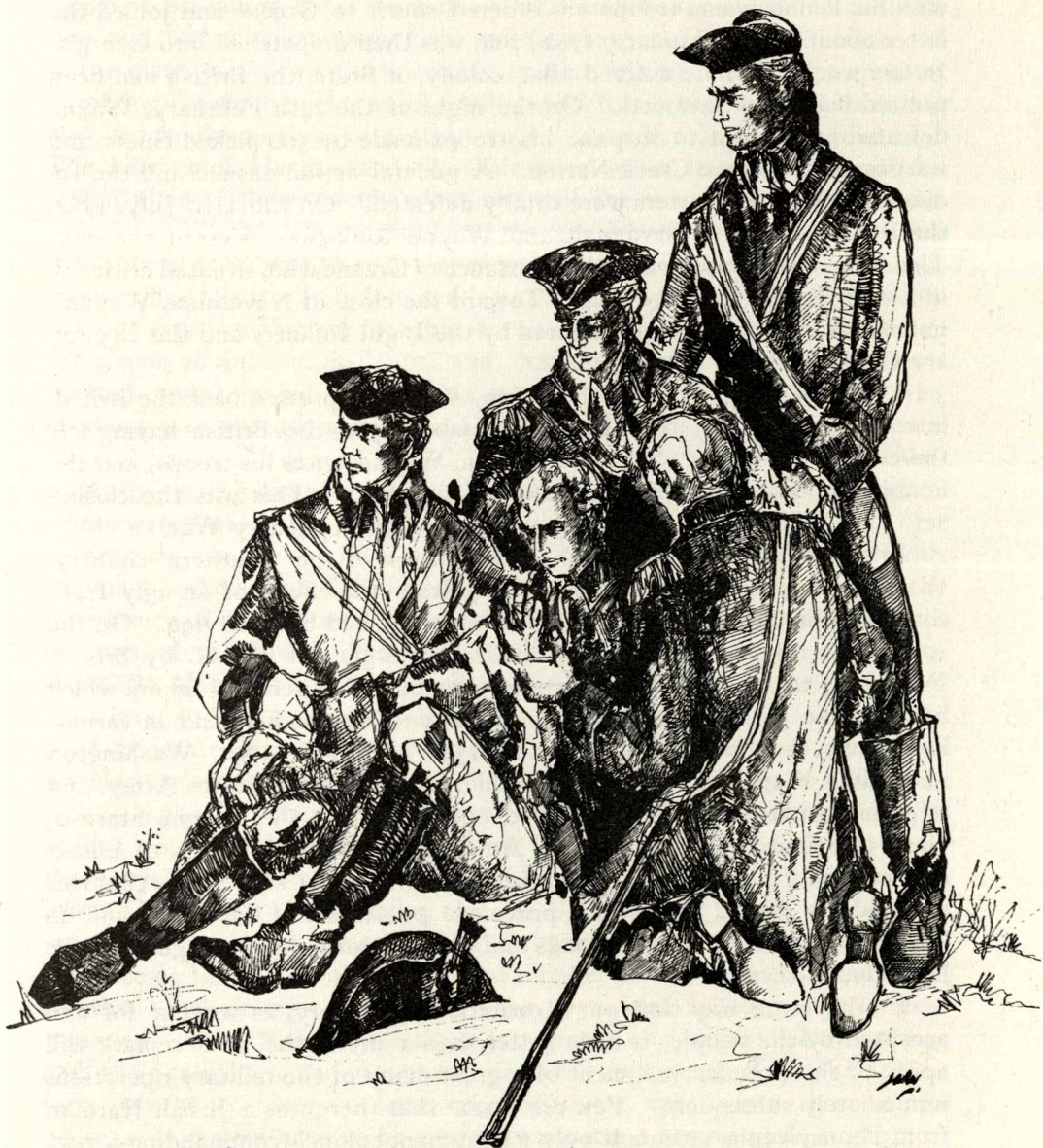
Harbor. Quite a controversy has arisen as to the meaning or origin of this name. It is not only English but German. For instance, *Kalte Herberge*, or Cold-Shelter, or Inn, was quite a noted hostelry on the road from Freiburg to Hunningen, as early as the first settlement of Virginia. (Keysler, IV. App'x, 12.) It would seem to mean a public-house, which afforded shelter for man and beast, but where the former were expected to bring food with them and find lodging and shelter but not entertainment.

It may be as well to mention for those who have never examined a map of this portion of Virginia, that the road from Williamsburg to the Ford (?) through or Ferry over a narrow channel of the James River, to Jamestown Island, strikes the water at Church Point, about six miles southwest of Williamsburg, according to the Map of Virginia (sheet No. 9), entered according to Act of Congress, the 14th day of April, 1826, by John Tyler, Governor of the State of Virginia. Cobham is the village on the south side of the James, where the road to Portsmouth appears again upon the map. For Jamestown Island, Green Spring (Plantation), and other points mentioned in this article, see pages 445, 446, 447, volume 2, *Lossing's Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution*. Jamestown, the first English settlement in the United States, was made on this island in 1608. Nothing now remains but a few ruins.

much as possible, meanwhile throwing over, into the Island, several detachments and disposing them so as to make it appear that their number was large. Deceived by every report which he received, La Fayette believed that the largest portion of the British had crossed during the night. Accordingly, 6th July, he sent forward his riflemen and militia to attack the English outposts and hold their attention whilst with his regulars he advanced, intending to cut off the British rear-guard. Cornwallis did everything to confirm La Fayette in his delusion. The detachments of English light troops were withdrawn and the pickets which had not been thrown out far, were driven in without difficulty. Just before sundown, La Fayette came to the front determined to make a reconnaissance with his own eyes. Cornwallis *had every reason to believe* that he had set a trap which would catch his man and he would have done so if it had not been for Wayne. When he advanced to nip La Fayette, and drove back the first line of Americans, he came upon Wayne with a select body, estimated by different writers at from five to eight hundred, a picked body. Wayne knew that to retreat precipitately was to court destruction; so, he determined to make audacity supply the place of force. Instead of falling back he struck out and back with such effect that he checked Cornwallis, just as Pleasanton with his cavalry and artillery stopped Stonewall Jackson, for the moment, 2d May, on our right, at Chancellorsville, when Howard's Corps had been run out and sent kiting. Wayne behaved so splendidly, that Cornwallis concluded that Wayne must have ample supports at hand, and that a trap might be sprung on him such as he thought he had set so skillfully and infallibly for La Fayette. Gallant as he was, he did not deem it advisable to press the matter further. Wayne extricated himself skillfully and, in the course of the night, Cornwallis crossed his army over to Jamestown Island and thence continued his march to Portsmouth.* Perhaps this was the handsomest thing Wayne ever did and it is from such achievements that "A soldier knows a soldier, a man knows a man." In the fall of Cornwallis—not his fault but the disgrace of Clinton—Wayne

* Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Simcoe, of the famous Loyalist Partisan Corps, known as the "Queen's Rangers," in his Military Journal, at page 239, tells the story a little differently:

"On the 4th July the army marched to Jamestown, for the purpose of crossing the river at that place, and proceeding to Portsmouth: the Queen's Rangers crossed the river that evening, and took post to cover the baggage, which was passing over as expeditiously as possible. *On the evening of the 6th*, as Earl Cornwallis had predicted, M. de la Fayette attacked his army, *mistaking it for the rear guard only: the affair was almost confined to the 80th and 76th regiments*, under the command of Lt.-Col. Dundas, whose good conduct and gallantry was conspicuously displayed on that occasion. M. de la Fayette was *convinced of his error*, by being instantly repulsed and losing what cannon he had brought with him. The army passed over, marched on the 9th toward Portsmouth."



...Wayne was severely wounded....

did not play his usual prominent part throughout. On the very day on which the French troops landed, Wayne was severely wounded in the thigh by the accidental shot of a frightened American sentry. Still he worked in at the end and influenced the surrender. From Virginia, Wayne with his Pennsylvania troops was ordered south to Greene and joined the latter about the 1st January, 1782; and was then despatched into Georgia. In five weeks after he entered that colony, or State, the British had been pressed back into Savannah. On the night of the 24th February, Wayne defeated an attempt to surprise his troops made by 500 picked chiefs and warriors of the brave Creek Nation. A general action ensued and the Indians and their supporters were totally defeated. On the 11th July, 1782, the British evacuated Savannah, and Wayne took possession of the city. Thence he was summoned to the assistance of Greene who, situated critically in South Carolina, needed help. Toward the close of November, Wayne's immediate command was augmented by the Light Infantry and the Legionary Corps.

Thus stiffened, he passed the Ashley River and pressed back the British into Charleston. On the 14th of December, 1782, the British having left the city in accordance with a convention, Wayne, with his troops, had the honor of taking peaceable possession of the place. This was the closing act of his brilliant active participation in the Revolutionary War.

In July, 1783, having finished his duties in the Southern country, Wayne turned to Philadelphia, suffering from the effects of an ugly fever contracted in that malarious region in which he had been serving. On the 10th of October, 1783, he was made major-general U.S.A. by brevet. From 1783 to 1792, his attention was directed to his personal affairs which had become greatly disordered by his absence in the field and in various honorable civil positions. On the 13th of April, 1792, Washington nominated Wayne as commander-in-chief of the United States Army, and after his confirmation he was called out West into the present State of Ohio, to restore the honor of the American arms lost by years of unsuccessful hostility against the Indians in that region, and to determine that this rich country should become the peaceable possession of the whites and no longer be oppressed by the inroads and depredations of the savage. In this he perfectly succeeded.

In the same way that our Revolutionary history, as written for and accepted by the people, is little better than a myth, the same remark will apply to the popular judgment of a great many of the military operations immediately subsequent. Few are aware that there was a Josiah Harmar, from Pennsylvania, although only a lieutenant-colonel (commanding a regi-

ment of infantry), and brigadier-general by brevet, who was general-in-chief of the United States Army, succeeding Washington. He is best known for his defeats on the Miami River in western Ohio, and one near Chillicothe, 19th and 22d of October, 1790. Although thus unfavorably known, the blame of his failure is far more due to the inefficiency of the Administration and untrustworthiness of the militia than to Harmar. He was one of the many victims of the miserable system followed by our government in relying for emergencies upon a militia which in a vast majority of cases, have led to the sacrifice of better men by cowardice and insubordination. The failures of Harmar and St. Clair were rather those of a pernicious system than of those commanders, but still the remedy lay with the commander as Wayne demonstrated in 1793, and Thomas in 1864, or lies in a bold refusal to submit to such a system without the opportunity of at least attempting to better it before making an attempt at application. Scarcely any one censures Harmar for what he was most censurable, his emulating the course of Sullivan in 1779, and destroying the extensive orchards planted and fostered by the Indians, a desolation which the Turks, obedient to their dogmas, do not inflict. "While emulous of renown, General Harmar disgraced himself, as General Sullivan had done in New York, by cutting down or girdling the fine orchards with which the settlements were surrounded."

Harmar after this failure proceeded to Washington and resigned his command. Arthur St. Clair succeeded him as general-in-chief, and with the inheritance of his position, to his predecessors' ill luck. Even as Sullivan's invasion of the Indian country in 1779, all its vaunted success, did not arrest the constant occurrence of Indian reprisals, but rather increased their fury, so in the same way Harmar's destructions were followed by the most desperate efforts of the savages—efforts in a great measure occasioned by Harmar's calculated destruction of their food. These St. Clair was sent to repress. When he started out, Washington solemnly warned him against a surprise, for our first President had been with Braddock, and knew the horrible effects, even upon the most steady troops, of an Indian surprise. On the 4th of November, 1791, St. Clair, sent to punish the Indians, was terribly punished himself. In the engagement near the sources of the Maumee of the Lakes, about an equal number of whites and Indians met. Of the 1400 effectives under St. Clair, 632 were killed, and 234 were wounded. Other honest investigators augment the number of the whites and their casualties, and doubt the accepted exaggeration of the Indian force, which, according to some accounts, were not over a third of the whites. It is very hard to have to throw a stone at one against whom so

many rocks have been hurled, but when an officer accepts a responsibility, and he finds the means furnished totally inadequate to the service and result expected of him, there are only two alternatives; *either* to resign or expect to bear all the blame, and accept it as deserved. One of the greatest of prime ministers, when an officer was recommended to him for a command always asked first, "Is he lucky?" Perhaps the best criterion whereby to form a judgment of honest St. Clair (who by the way was not an American, but a Scotchman, a foreigner like so many of the Revolutionary generals and leaders who engineered in the Revolution), in regard to his course at Ticonderoga in 1777, is the management of his campaign against the Indians in 1791. No one can doubt his devotion and integrity, but, in both cases, against the British and the Indians, his capacity was unequal, and his characteristics unsuitable to the occasion; and it is in meeting the occasion lies the test of men. Our great, among the greatest, if not our very greatest, George H. Thomas, hero of Mill Spring, Stone River, Chickamauga, Chattanooga, and Nashville, held to the opinion that when an officer of real reputation became satisfied that while he was inadequately furnished with means he was yet impelled by his government to do that which his experience demonstrated, was actually, or equal to, an impossibility according to all human means of judging, he owed it to himself to resign. The action of Thomas before Nashville clearly demonstrated the correctness of his views.

In spite of the unreasonable and ungenerous goading of superiors and the administration, Thomas would not fight until he felt he was ready to fight. He would not obey graceless and senseless orders. What was the result? He took his own way, and when he felt that he was prepared then, and not before, he struck a deadly blow.

After St. Clair's catastrophe the Indians continued their hostilities with terrible vigor and effect for nearly three years more. Wayne succeeded St. Clair, who held the position for exactly one year, as general-in-chief, in March, 1792. In the fall of 1793 Wayne was sent against the Indians. He did not plunge blindly forward into a trap, but, on the principle of Thomas before Nashville, spent the whole ensuing summer in preparing his troops for the service they had to perform—in getting a perfect ready.* The

* Against savages or demi-savages or desperate irregulars it is often necessary to improvise tactics. Thus the Duke of Cumberland, comprehending why his predecessors had so often suffered defeat at the hands of the Highlanders, made his dispositions for Culloden on an entirely new and different principle. General Sir Edward Cust says (I. 2. 101, § 4): "The Duke of Cumberland, on approaching to the attack, formed his army with great skill in three lines, disposed in excellent order for resisting the fierce attack of the rebels. Two pieces of cannon were placed

result was that when Wayne encountered the Indians in greater numbers than had ever assembled before on any one field—two thousand strong, it is stated—in the battle of the Maumee Rapids, at the “fallen timbers,” he inflicted upon them a complete defeat, which may rank as the best thing of the kind on this continent. Wayne’s numbers are not given, but, whatever strength he had, his list of casualties was comparatively insignificant, realizing the judgment of the Governor of Messina, that “a victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers.” This solved the Indian problem in that quarter, and rounded off to perfectness—capped with solidifying finish, like the expensive stone at the apex of the Washington Monument—his exemplary career, for Wayne died 15th December, 1796, sixteen days less than fifty-two years of age, “in the full vigor of life, in the noon-tide of glory, and in the midst of usefulness.”

between every two regiments of the first line. *The second rank was instructed to reserve its fire; and, in order to obviate the effect of the Highland target, the soldiers were each instructed to direct their thrust against the man who fronted his right-hand comrade, rather than upon him who was directly before him, so that should the Highlanders, according to their custom, throw away their muskets and take to their broadswords they might be checked, and then be galled by an unexpected fire of musketry, which should be immediately followed by the bayonet.*”

Whenever the Indians have attempted to blend their peculiar tactics with those of the whites, when opposed to brave and able commanders, they have suffered fearfully, showing the wisdom of Skoboleff’s strictures, “always to fight the enemy with a weapon in which he is deficient.” Indian victories belong to the class of “Ambushes and Surprises,” like Dade’s Massacre in Florida, on 28th December, 1835, while the American Indian is just as open to surprises from inattention to outpost and sentry duty, in fact from causes due to want of instruction and discipline. Their force, like that of the Highlanders of Montrose and of Dundee, lay in their courage and activity, like that of all undisciplined nervous races, a mode of fighting only successful when opposed to officers who, with unsteady troops, stolidly await attack, as did Mackay at Kalliecrankie, or who depend on martinetism, like Braddock on the Monongahela. Harrison’s victory at the Thames was patterned on Wayne’s Waterloo over the same allies on the Miamis. Miles displayed a like ability against Sitting Bull. Again, wherever Indians have tried to make a stand behind permanent or temporary defenses, they have come terribly to grief. When left to themselves they seem incapable of applying anything like the rules of engineering to their works, paying no regard to the simplest arrangements for taking an assailant in flank. Take, for instance, the famous capture of the Pequod stockade citadel by the Eastern Colonists in 1637, the complete success of the French Governor-Generals of Canada in 1665 and 1693, and Jackson’s victories over the Creeks and Cherokees and Seminoles. Every defeat sustained by the whites at the hands of the Indians that might be termed a battle or engagement—this remark does not, of course, include surprises—has been due to neglect of the ordinary rules of common sense on the part of the leaders of the whites. The Indians have their peculiar tactics. These have to be studied and understood in the same way that the hunter must learn the habits and habitat of the prey that he seeks for food, interest, or pleasure. Wherever the Indians have undertaken to make a stand in positions fortified however strongly, according to their ideas, and the whites have been in anything like proportionate force, and led by determined leaders, the Indians have always suffered more severely than in the most bloody of field fights. Custer’s catastrophe is one of the most notable exceptions to this rule.

General Wayne was gifted with true soldierly inspiration, and yet he possessed, in addition, another most important quality for a subordinate: he was essentially obedient, and his deference to Washington was without bounds. It was this feeling, this confidence, that led to his remark: "that if your Excellency will plan it I will undertake to storm hell." This language, strong as it appears, was not the expression of a man deficient in respect for religion, but simply an assurance of the extreme influence with which Washington was capable of inspiring some of his trusted and trustworthy lieutenants. Napoleon said of the brutal, but bold and capable Vandamme, who came to grief at Culm, in 1813, that if he gave an order to storm hell, his Dutch general was the man he would select to make the attempt. It was in the same spirit that Platoff, Hetman of the Cossacks, responded with alacrity to the proposition to march his devoted troopers against the British possessions in India. The idea excited no surprise in the mind of the successor of Mazeppa, and he asked no explanations, simply remarking that if the Tzar directed him to storm hell, he would obey. In the cases of Vandamme and Platoff it was the blind obedience of irresponsible instruments; with Wayne it was an honest faith in the perfect wisdom of Washington. Perhaps there was not another well-known officer in the Continental Army that had such an intelligent, affectionate, unquestioning respect for the commander-in-chief. With those who judge without due examination and comparison of facts, without capacity to comprehend and exhaustively to digest cause, and result, and motives, Wayne was regarded as *rash*. It is all-sufficient answer to their judgment, Washington qualified him as "prudent."

It has been remarked in this sketch that the popular, high reputation of Wayne is based on his storming and capture of Stony Point. His fame should rest on far higher grounds. In that assault he was highly favored by circumstances. A professor who has written considerably on different portions of the Revolutionary War, has taken great exception to my opinions in regard to Stony Point, and considers the intervention of the negro guide, Pompey, as mythical. I consider it strictly true, and that it had a very great and fortunate influence upon the result. Again, the success was due, in a large degree, to the remissness, inexperience, and overconfidence of the British commandant—in fact, of all those to whom the defense was confided, or were supposed to be watching over its security. Moreover, Wayne had a much larger number of excellent troops than is usually credited to him. The credit due to him cannot, however, be lessened by the numbers or the circumstances of this case. None of these criticisms detract from the credit of Wayne. He had a perfect right to take

them into his calculations. He made his preparations, and he solved his problem. There is no discount to his enviable success as far as his intent and execution is concerned. Wayne's capture of Stony Point was in the spirit of Russell's storm of the Rebel Bridge Head on the Rappahannock, 7th November, 1863, and of the Union *coup d'emblée*, at Fort McAllister, 13th December, 1864. Wayne's "counter" at Green Spring,* again, was in the spirit of Warren's brilliant stroke at Bristow Station, 14th October, 1863. Schlange's self-sacrifice to save Baner, at Newburg, in 1639, belongs to the same class of devotion and determination of which "Military Ends and Moral Means" furnishes illustrious examples. The charge of the combined 2d and 3d corps, Army of the Potomac, at the Spottsylvania death angle, ranges up in the category of Wayne's Stony Point. His greatness—for he was great in his sphere and on his plane—rests upon the even tenor of his service. He never fell below the latter. Turenne, acquired great reputation by his management of the mutiny, defection and desertion of the Weymarian troops, who, treated unjustly by the French Government, decided to abandon its service and return to that of the Swedes, under whose flag they were originally organized and won much renown. Turenne undoubtedly exhibited tact; he used cajolery and courage. When he at-

* Captain Ewald, of the Hessian Jager Corps, an officer as remarkable for ability as courage, who served in America with great distinction, afterwards wrote a book entitled *Instructions in Respect to War*. In alluding to an encounter very much like that between Dundas (British) and Wayne at Green Spring, Ewald held and acted on the principle proper on such occasions,—always to attack the enemy without hesitation. In his *Belehrungen* he enjoins: "If an officer by night stumble on the enemy, let him give a volley and charge with the bayonet, without troubling himself as to the strength of his opponent. By these proceedings the latter, since he cannot see the strength of his assailant, is confounded, and the chief in command wins the whole time for making his dispositions.

On the 4th of July [1781], Cornwallis evacuated Williamsburg, for the purpose of pursuing his retreat to Portsmouth, his place of destination. On the morning of the 5th, Lafayette put his troops in motion, in order to effect his contemplated maneuver against the rear guard of his opponent, and, on the evening of that day, encamped within eight or nine miles of his Lordship. On the morning of the 6th the advanced corps under General Wayne moved toward the enemy. Under a conviction from intelligence received that the greater part of the British army had passed over into the Island of Jamestown during the preceding night, the Marquis also moved forward at the head of the main army, with the view of carrying his object into full effect; whilst General Wayne, with part of the advanced corps, in the afternoon commenced driving in the outposts of the enemy; but he soon discovered that in place of the rear guard, nearly the whole of the British army was drawn up to oppose him, and within a short distance of his front. Says Marshall, in his *Life of Washington*: "A retreat was now impossible, and the boldest had become the safest measure. Under this impression he advanced rapidly, and with his small detachment, not exceeding eight hundred men, made a gallant charge on the British line. A warm action ensued, which was kept up with great spirit for several minutes, when Lafayette who had now come up, ordered him to retreat and form in line with the light infantry, who were drawn up about half a mile in his rear."

tempted to apply force he only partially succeeded in arresting a portion of the absconding forces. Wayne showed common sense and calm bravery, and he was completely successful. And here let it be remarked that Becker, a German historian, who was very careful in his presentation of facts, stated that the majority of the Pennsylvania mutineers were foreigners, and their ringleader a British deserter.

Americans who pride themselves so much on the issue of the Revolution are very little aware how much of the triumph was secured by "Military (men and) Ends and Moral Means," remote, mediate, and immediate, *foreign, not native*. However, the consideration of those influences does not lie within the scope of the present sketch. If any expert takes interest and devotes time to investigate the career of Wayne, he will arrive at the conclusion that our general rose higher and higher with every succeeding opportunity until his glory culminated, not so much in his victory over the Western Indians, as in his wise preparations and personal courage which made that victory certain.

It is related that when the British had the upper hand in Pennsylvania, a British detachment visited the Wayne homestead in hopes of capturing the general. In searching the house the officer in command pulled open a closet door and started back on finding himself confronted by a Continental uniform of Wayne, which hung on a peg. "Do even the general's clothes alarm thee?" observed a lady of the family who was standing by, watching the proceedings of the search. This anecdote amounts to little except to show that Wayne's reputation must have been more than unusually high, or else it would never have entered into the mind of the speaker to imagine that the apparition of Wayne's uniform would have any weight on the mind of a soldier.

In conclusion, in an examination of the military character of Wayne there is no necessity of indulging in the slightest exaggeration to establish his claim for enrollment in the highest class of military ability. He was a common-sense, practical general, a "duty man," very much like another Pennsylvanian, Major-General, A. A. Humphreys, developed by "the Slaveholders' Rebellion." Both possessed the best intelligence, the highest intrepidity, the finest sense of honor, and the completest devotion to duty. He displayed the noblest qualities on the most varied fields. He was an adroit politician and consummate master of the art of influencing men. He stands second in capacity to no general of the Revolution. He was more audacious than Greene, with all the electrifying force of Arnold on the battle-field; a clearer head under fire than the first, and a cooler leader under every circumstance than the latter. This is saying all that is neces-



"Do even the general's clothes alarm thee?"

sary to establish his reputation. Moreover, he had as much judgment as Schuyler. Nothing more need be added. He was tried in every way and never found wanting. Pitted against the best regular troops and officers on the battle-field, he was admirable; their equal in determination and dash. Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth, Green Spring proved this. Opposed to the most dangerous mutiny, he evinced an equanimity and moral force which superseded the necessity of material vigor. Against the courageous Indians of the West, the famous Thayandenga under Brant, flushed with victory over two generals, his predecessors, his triumph was like that of Thomas at Nashville, decisive. In his attitude of patriotic determination, backed by a fearless courage, he subsequently awed the British authorities after his victory, 20th August, 1794, and won a bloodless success which entitles him to the highest praise.

Popular opinion, almost always based on ignorance and rarely the offspring of knowledge, has never done justice to Wayne. He may have lacked some of the qualities that distinguished Washington, and some of the opportunities which favored Greene, and certain notable traits which rendered Schuyler so remarkable, but, averaging forces, he was a better soldier than either. As a politician or administrator he never entered the lists. His sphere of action was the military, pure and simple. In that he never failed. He never fell short of the occasion. He was always equal to the requirements of the time. As a soldier, few so prominently forward have such a perfect record. Scrutinize his whole career, and it cannot be denied that the United States has not as yet possessed a soldier who, under existing circumstances—mark this—under the circumstances of his station and the time, who has played the part assigned to him with more ability. On a grander stage, in a more important roll, he may have come short of the requirements of both, but on the boards he was called upon to act, no deficiency could be detected, and from what he was called upon to do, and from what he did, he must be judged. From this point of view the verdict must incontestably be that Wayne was most remarkable as a soldier, greatly distinguished as a general, and worthy of all respect as a citizen.

